

MAMMOGRAM FACT SHEET

WHAT IS A MAMMOGRAM?

Today, fewer women are dying from breast cancer because of the regular use of screening mammography. A mammogram is an x-ray that can detect early signs of breast cancer. Some tumors will show up on a mammogram two years before they can be felt as lumps in the breast.

When a problem area shows up on a mammogram, it does not always mean cancer. If a mammogram does not look normal, a health care provider will suggest minor surgery to take a sample of breast tissue. The breast tissue is then tested in a laboratory to see if it's cancer.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A MAMMOGRAM:

Deodorant, perfume, powders or creams should not be worn on the day of the mammogram because they can cause the x-ray pictures to be unclear. For this reason, all jewelry from the neck should also be removed. The health care providers and mammogram technician should be advised if the patient is pregnant or breast-feeding.

HOW IS A MAMMOGRAM PERFORMED?

When a mammogram is taken, low dose x-rays are used.

Depending on the type of equipment available, the patient will sit or stand for the procedure.

Once the patient is in position, one breast at a time is placed on a flat surface that contains an x-ray plate.

A device is then pressed firmly against the breast to flatten it out. Proper compression will result in clear pictures of the breasts.

X-rays are taken from a few different angles to show the inner structures of the breasts.

BREAST CARE RECOMMENDATIONS:

The American Cancer Society suggests that all women over the age of 20 perform monthly breast self-exams. Also, the American Cancer Society advises women:

- Age 20-39 to have a clinical breast exam once every 3 years
- Age 35 to have a baseline mammogram
- Age 40 and older to have a clinical breast exam followed

by a mammogram each year

The early detection of breast cancer has been shown to save lives and increase treatment choices.

Readability:

Ease – 69.9

Grade- 7.0